

HOW TO... Copy your home movies

The software on this month's cover disc makes copying home movies from DVDs simple, as Patrick Mundy explains

X-OOM MOVIE CLONE 3



One of the best things about producing home movies on your PC is that you can make copies and send them to friends and family. This is easy if you still have all your project files to hand, but if you've had to archive them to make room for your next production, you'll need to perform a disc-to-disc copy.

X-oom Movie Clone specialises in this task, and can even copy two-layer DVD Videos on to single-layer media, saving on the cost of blank discs. It achieves this by recoding the video, which involves decoding the MPEG2 video stream and encoding it again at a lower bit rate, resulting in smaller file sizes. Using the software isn't difficult, but the following steps tell you everything you need to know.

1 Install X-oom Movie Clone 3 from the cover disc and run it. Choose one of the three options that matches the source and destination of your copying task: DVD to hard disk, DVD to DVD, or hard disk to DVD.

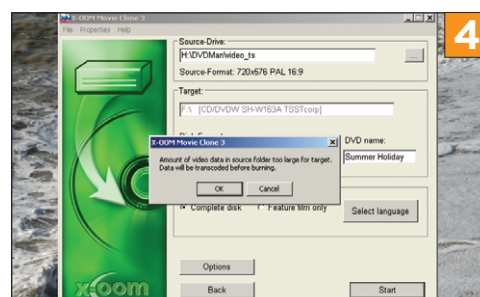
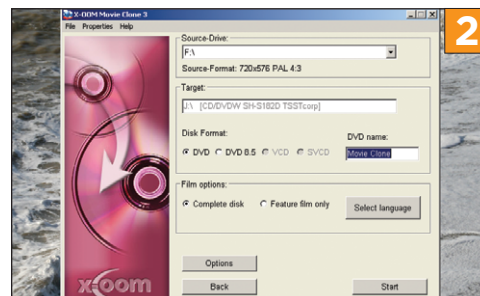
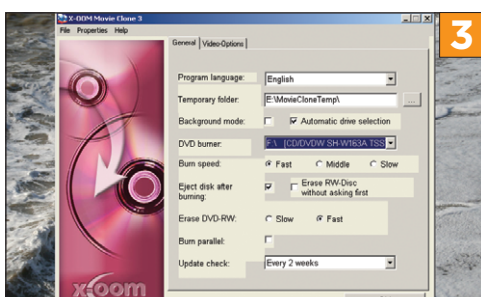
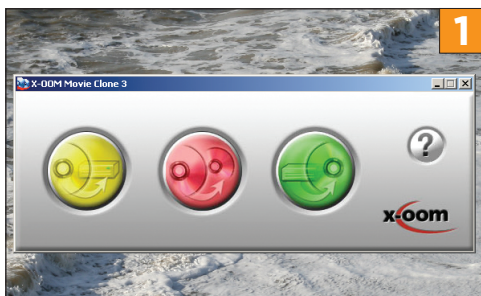
2 Under Source Drive: select the DVD drive or hard disk folder that contains the DVD Video you want to copy. If you're copying from DVD to hard disk, click the button to the right on the Target: option to choose the location to which you want to copy files.

The next option down is Disk Format, which is where you determine whether you want to copy to single- or two-layer DVD media (two-layer is referred

to as DVD 8.5). If your source disc is two-layer and you choose to copy to a single-layer disc, Movie Clone will recode the video to fit the new capacity. However, this will have an impact on image quality. As a general rule, fitting more than two hours of video on a single-layer disc will have a noticeably adverse effect on image quality. One way to avoid reducing the quality too much is to copy only the main movie without any menus or extra features, which allows the movie to be recoded at a higher bit rate. To select this feature, click the Feature film only button under Film options.

3 Click the Options button to access the remaining settings. Temporary folder: is the location on your hard disk where Movie Clone generates temporary files during the copying process. You'll need 4.7GB of space, so make sure the folder that's selected is on a drive with enough space. Under DVD burner: select the drive you want to write to if necessary, and untick Automatic drive selection to stop the software switching back to the wrong drive. The remaining options should be fine at their default settings, so click OK to return to the main screen.

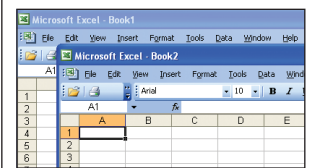
4 Under DVD name, give an appropriate name for the DVD you're copying, then click Start. If you're copying from two- to single-layer media, you'll receive a warning that the video will be recoded before burning. Click OK, and in around half an hour your copied disc should be complete. **CA**



HOW TO... Use Excel on two monitors

Excel is set by default to open a new spreadsheet within the same Excel window. This is great most of the time, and is the best way to work where formulae are used to share information between spreadsheets, or are copied from one sheet to another.

However, if you have two monitors and want to work on two spreadsheets at the same time, it's more convenient to have one sheet on one screen and the other displayed on the other screen. The easiest way to do this is to hold down the Shift key, then click on Excel's program entry in the Start menu. This will start a second instance of the program. Open your spreadsheet in here, then you can move it to the other monitor just as you would any program.



HOW TO... Convert forms to text

Many people work with a number of different forms in Word, such as leave requests, bookings or feedback forms. Sometimes it can be much easier to work with the answers provided on these forms if the form is converted into an ordinary text document.

There's a quick and easy way to do this. First make sure you unprotect the form by choosing that option from the Tools menu. Next select the whole document. Don't do this by running the cursor down the form and highlighting, even if it is a short form. Instead, choose Select All from the Edit menu or press Ctrl+A. Once the form is highlighted, press Ctrl-Shift-F9. This converts the form into a text document.

